

R E M A R K S

Reconsideration of this application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

THE DRAWINGS

Figs. 2A-2C and 3A-3C have been amended as indicated in red on the accompanying copies thereof to identify the claimed features of the side surfaces 9 and side surface portions 10 of the multilayer piezoelectric actuator device of the present invention, as required by the Examiner.

Submitted herewith are corrected sheets of formal drawing which incorporate the amendments and a Letter to the Official Draftsperson requesting approval thereof.

It is respectfully submitted that no new matter has been added, and it is respectfully requested that the Examiner's objection to the drawings be withdrawn.

THE ABSTRACT AND SPECIFICATION

The abstract and specification have been amended to make some minor grammatical improvements and to correct minor informalities of which the undersigned has become aware.

In addition, the specification has also been amended to refer to reference numerals 9 and 10 now shown in the amended drawings, and to refer to the disclosure in Fig 2A at page 7, line 4 for enabling an improved understanding of the structure of the claimed present invention.

Submitted herewith are marked copies of the changed pages to show that no new matter has been added, and also submitted herewith is a substitute specification incorporating all of the amendments. And it is respectfully requested that the substitute specification be approved and entered.

THE CLAIMS

Claims 1 and 2-7 have been amended to more clearly recite the distinguishing features of the present invention, taking into account the Examiner's comments in item 3 of the Office Action.

In particular, it is noted that each of independent claims 1, 6 and 7 have been amended to more clearly recite the feature of the present invention whereby each of the conductive members includes a free end portion that is spaced apart from and faced to the respective side surfaces of the multilayer structure of the claimed present invention. (See the disclosure in the specification at page 6, line 19 to page 7, line 6, and see also the disclosure in Fig. 2A, for example.)

Submitted herewith are marked copies of the claims to show that no new matter has been added, and clean versions of the amended claims are set forth hereinabove.

It is respectfully submitted that the amended claims are in full compliance with all of the requirements of 35 USC 112, second paragraph, and it is respectfully requested that the amendments to the claims be approved and entered and that the rejection under 35 USC 112, second paragraph be withdrawn.

THE PRIOR ART REJECTION

Claims 1-6 were rejected under 35 USC 102 as being anticipated by USP 5,866,196 ("Ueno et al") or in the alternative as being obvious in view of the combination of Ueno et al and USP 5,289,074 ("Mori"), and claim 7 was rejected under 35 USC 103 as being unpatentable over Ueno et al, in view of Mori and USP 5,932,951 ("Unami"). These rejections, however, are respectfully traversed with respect to the claims as amended hereinabove.

As pointed out hereinabove, according to the present invention as recited in each of independent claims 1, 6 and 7, each of the conductive members includes a free end portion that is spaced apart from and faced to the respective side surfaces of the multilayer structure of the piezoelectric actuator device of the claimed present invention.

As a result of this feature of the claimed present invention, even if a crack occurs in the multilayer structure and the external electrodes, the free end portion of the conductive members will still electrically connect upper and lower segments of the external electrode so as to keep electrical connection of all of the internal electrodes. And thus, the multilayer piezoelectric actuator device of the claimed present invention is prevented from degradation in function. (Again, see the disclosure in the specification at page 6, line 19 to page 7, line 6 - wherein the free end portion of the conductive members

is referred to as the second transverse end, and see also the disclosure in Fig. 2A, for example.)

It is respectfully submitted that none of Ueno et al, Mori and Unami discloses, teaches or suggests the above described structural feature of the present invention as recited in each of independent claims 1, 6 and 7 whereby each of the conductive members includes a free end portion that is spaced apart from and faced to the respective side surfaces of the multilayer structure of the piezoelectric actuator device of the claimed present invention.

And it is respectfully submitted that none of Ueno et al, Mori and Unami discloses, teaches or suggests the above described advantageous effect achieved by the structure of the multilayer piezoelectric actuator device of the present invention as recited in each of amended independent claims 1, 6 and 7.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that the present invention as recited in each of amended independent claims 1, 6 and 7, as well as each of claims 2-5 depending from amended claim 1, patentably distinguishes over Ueno et al, Mori and Unami, taken singly or in any combination, under 35 USC 102 as well as under 35 USC 103.

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In view of the foregoing, entry of this Amendment, allowance of the claims and the passing of this application to issue are respectfully solicited.

If the Examiner has any comments, questions, objections or recommendations, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the telephone number given below for prompt action.

Respectfully submitted,



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